Although the original *Cambridge History of India*, published between 1922 and 1937, did much to formulate a chronology for Indian history and describe the administrative structures of government in India, it has inevitably been overtaken by the mass of new research over the past fifty years.

Designed to take full account of recent scholarship and changing conceptions of South Asia’s historical development, *The New Cambridge History of India* will be published as a series of short, self-contained volumes, each dealing with a separate theme and written by a single person. Within an overall four-part structure, thirty-one complementary volumes in uniform format will be published. Each will conclude with a substantial bibliographical essay designed to lead non-specialists further into the literature.

The four parts planned are as follows:

I The Mughals and their contemporaries

II Indian states and the transition to colonialism

III The Indian Empire and the beginnings of modern society

IV The evolution of contemporary South Asia

A list of individual titles in preparation will be found at the end of the volume.
European commercial enterprise in pre-colonial India

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Coupled with other stresses, the final succession war fatally compromised the power of the Imperial court and resulted in an India comprised of a set of regional successor states. This was the chronically divided and conflict plagued subcontinent that permitted opportunistic European conquest. A history of science in India must also be a history of India, not merely a history of the projection of Western science onto India. One of the principal rationales for a work such as this, which seeks to give an interpretative overview of science, technology and medicine in India from the late eighteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries, must be that there is a new recognition of the centrality of science to an effective understanding of the history of India during the period marked by.